

NAME: KAWAMURA, YASU DATE OF BIRTH: 1889 PLACE OF BIRTH: HIROSHIMA
 Age: 90 Sex: F Marital Status: M Education: GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 1912 Age: 23 M.S. PB Port of entry: SEATTLE
~~SAN FRANCISCO~~
 Occupation/s: 1. HELP HUSBAND IN BARBERSHOP 2. HOUSEWIFE 3. _____
 Place of residence: 1. SACRAMENTO 2. WALNUT GROVE 3. _____
 Religious affiliation: BUDDHIST
 Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: MERCED
 Name of relocation center: AMACHE
 Dispensation of property: STORED AT NEIGHBOR'S HOME Names of bank/s: LEFT HOME TO ALEX BROWN
(BANKER)
 Jobs held in camp: 1. _____ 2. _____
 Jobs held outside of camp: _____
 Left camp to go to: _____

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: 1945?
 Address/es: 1. WALNUT GROVE 2. _____
 3. _____
 Religious affiliation: CHRISTIAN
 Activities: 1. LEARNED BARBERING 2. TO HELP HUSBAND'S 3. Shop
 If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: _____

Name of interviewer: TAKARABE Date: 6/79 Place: WALNUT GROVE
 translator: Mabel Hall

T: To begin with, please tell me your name.

K: Kawamura, Yasu

Q: When were you born?

A: In 1889. I am 90 years old.

Q: When were you born?

A: In Hiroshima.

Q: What kind of people were your parents?

A: My father worked at the water police in Kobe when he was young, so I lived in Kobe when I was a child. We came back to Hiroshima when I started going to grammar school.

Q: Was your father a strict man?

A: He was not too strict. He was a religious, sensible good man.

When he came back to Hiroshima he started a business. He opened his store in Kure where he was taken in by someone and took a big loss. Then he came home and started a business there, but once he failed he could not recover. As I was the only daughter I was taken good care of, and could learn anything I wanted to. When I was around 20 my father's business went bankrupt. My husband-to-be who was related to me came to America when he was young. He wanted a wife so I was asked to be his wife and come to America. I came here in 1912.

Q: Were you ever scolded by your father?

A: I think I was scolded by being naughty.

Q: What about your brothers and sisters?

A: I didn't have any. I was the only child so I was taken good care of.

I didn't think he would let me come here, but as his business failed I think he decided to let me come here.

Q: What kind of a person was your mother?

A: She was a farmer's daughter and did not have much schooling as it was long time ago. Her family was a big farmer. When we came back from Kobe we stayed there for a while. In winter time they hired people to raise oysters by the sea. When they grew big they picked them with boats, shell them and sold the meat. They did that beside farming so her family was doing well. When I was coming to America they tried to stop me as I learned to do anything. As I was the only daughter and my father had a big business he let me learn sewing, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, samisen and dancing. I know everything.

Q: Did you like them?

A: I liked them. In Japan, the daughters of mercants are supposed to learn all those things in our town.

Q: What is the name of the town?

A. It is Kaitai Ichi city now. When I went back to Japan after 50 years, I didn't know where my house was. I was lost, so my cousin took me around.

Q: What do you remember about your mother?

A: She was a farmer's daughter, but was a very gentle person. She let me learn anything because she believed that we never know what a woman will need in the future. I learned flower arrangement for many years, so I taught flower arrangement at church.

Q: What kind of wholesale business was your father in?

A: It was cotton. He went to fields with men and bought cotton from farmers. Then he manufactured cotton at home. We had 6 or 7 machines in the back of our house. The cotton was removed from the seed, put in the machine and ^{and} punded, then fluffed. Then it was spread and divided according to its usage. It was quite a large manufacturing business. I still remember my father coming home with cotton he bought from farmers on horses. He had a big business but he failed and went bankrupt and lost everything.

Q: What did he do after he went bankrupt?

A: He had a small piece of land, so he grew rice, vegetable and flowers on it just enough for us to eat. Hiroshima is a religious place, and there were 2 temples in our town. My father took delight on taking flowers to one of the temples. He died young as he was worried too much and damaged his heart.

Q: Your father wasn't a Christian, wasn't he?

A: No, he was a Buddhist. I became a Christian after I came here.

Q: What was your maiden name?

A: It was Ogata.

Q: How did you marry Mr. Kawamura?

A: We were related. My husband's parents asked my father if he would let me come to America as their son was there. My father thought that would be good, so he told me to go to America. My father was poor at that time, so I thought I might be able to send some money home as I heard that America was a country where people could make money. We were good to my father since I came here as my husband's business went well.

Q: Have you met Mr. Kawamura before?

A: No, I didn't know him.

Q: When your parents told you to marry him, did you say "yes" ?

A: Yes, I did. In those days picture marriage was popular, and I came here as a picture bride.

Q: After your marriage was decided, did you make arrangements to have your name entered in the family register?

A: Yes, I did in Japan.

Q: What did you do after that?

A: I went to the Kawamura's for about half a year although I stayed at my house most of the time. Then I came here.

Q: Was your house some distance from the Kawamura's?

A: Yes, it was a ^hsort distance away from them. My house was in Kaitai Ichi town and the Kawamura's was in Fuchu village. When I went home last time it had become a big city. Mr. Asato Dote came from the same village as my husband, and they knew each other well. I saw Mr. Dote when he was young, so he is glad to see me when we meet in Sacramento.

Q: How old were you when your name was entered in the family register?

A: I was 19 years old.

Q: Were you happy then?

A: I had an uneasy feeling as I was going to marry a man I never met, but I wanted to come to America.

Q: How did you feel when you saw his picture?

A: I didn't have any special feeling. I just thought that must be the man. When I came here he looked different as the picture was taken when he was young. I got on board the Inaba-Marui from Kobe, and it stopped at Yokohama for a while. It took many days to get here. Three days before we arrived here we heard the news that Emperor Meiji passed away. When I came to Sacramento my husband had a store on L Street.

Q: What was the name of the store?

A: It was Kawamura Barber Shop. It was a small barber shop on L street.

Q: How much education did you have?

A: I attended a girls' high school in Hiroshima for a while. It is a mission school now.

Q: Was it a girls' high school?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: How many years did you go to grammar school?

A: Eight years. Then I went to the girls' high school in Hiroshima and took the domestic science course which taught sewing, flower arrangement, tea ceremony and etiquette. I had to drop out of the school as my father went bankrupt, so I did not graduate.

Q: How many years did you attend the high school?

A: I think I attended it only about 2 years.

Q: Weren't you sad when your father went bankrupt?

A: Yes, I was very sad. Our clothes and everything was seized. Japanese distrainers are very cruel. They sealed everything so that they could not be moved. At that time I was a young girl, so I trembled. I felt very miserable. Anyway, I did not stay in Japan too long. I have been living here longer, so I don't remember much about Japan.

Q: Did you like schools?

A: Yes, I liked schools.

Q: What kind of thing do you remember about schools?

A: I liked history and geography. When I learned Shigin in Chicago about 30 years ago I found history in Shigin , and recalled the history I learned in grammar school.

Q: Do you remember about your teacher?

A: They were all good teachers. There were no schools in villages in those days, so children from 8 villages came to the school in our town. They commuted even when it was cold or raining. By and by each village built their own school and children did not have to commute so far. I know many people in Sacramento. Henry Takeda's sister was my classmate. She graduated from Nakayama Girls' High School. My school was called Shuntoku Girls' High School. I hear that the name has been changed, Mrs. Akamatsu attended a fashionable girls' high school.

Q: Do you have memories of the voyage? Were you lonesome?

A: No, I wasn't lonesome as I was with a friend in the third class. The voyage was good, but I was seasick and couldn't eat anything so I became as skinny as a sick person by the time I landed. My husband thought, "What a skinny pale woman came as my bride!". I don't blame him for thinking like that because I hadn't eaten until a couple of days before I landed. I don't like ship as I get seasick. I had the same kind of experience when we went for a boat ride from the school.

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Q: Did you stop at Hawaii?

A: No, I came directly to Seattle.

Q: Did your husband meet you at Seattle?

A: Yes, he met me at Seattle.

Q: How many years difference was there between you and your husband?

A: Eight.

Q: What did you think when you saw your husband for the first time?

A: I didn't know ^{him} but I thought he may be the one to be my husband as he looked like the man in the picture. Then we went to Fujii Hotel in Seattle managed by a Hiroshima kenjin, and stayed there that night. The next day we went to Sacramento by train. It took a long time to go from Seattle to Sacramento, but the scenery was good. When we arrived in Sacramento many friends welcomed us, so I was relieved. After a while I became lonesome and wanted to go back to Japan. I cried, so my husband became angry and told me to go home if I wanted to. In the meantime babies were born so I was settled.

Q: How many children did you have?

A: Seven, 5 of them are boys. That is the second son. Our first son died of pneumonia when he was 22, only 3 days after he became ill. We have good medicine now so we could have saved his life if it was today. It has been 35 years since he died.

Q: What kind of a place did you think Sacramento was when you came here?

A: Sacramento was a nice town. In those days white ladies walked on the sidewalks dragging their skirts as I see in pictures. When I was in Kobe I used to go to a missionary's house on the bluff on Sundays with a daughter of the water police chief. The missionaries pat our heads and gave us pictures of Jesus, apples and oranges. I had many beautiful oil paintings. When I look back at that time, I think God has led me to become a Christian since then. When I was home my father was a devout Buddhist, and did not let us have breakfast until we worship the Buddha. Since I came here Dr. Akamatsu's parents have been nice to us as they were our neighbors.

Q: How long did you stay in Sacramento?

A: One year. I came here in 1913.

Q: Do you remember about Sacramento around 1912 or 1913?

A: Yes, I remember that there was a big store named Aki Co. on the corner of L and 4th Streets. Across the street on the corner of 3rd Street was Tsuda Co. selling hardware. There were many fine people there. June Miyagawa's father had a hospital on the 3rd. Street. There was also ^aHmai Kaishundo Drug store. The owner was from Hiroshima.

Q: Were there many taverns in those days?

A: Yes, there were many tavern and restaurants, My husband used to spend all the money except \$27 for the rent at taverns. As there were many single men, they asked him to go to taverns with them, so he took them. Fortunately, he didn't gamble.

Q: Did he do that even after you came here?

A: No, not after I came here, only ^{when} ~~^~~ he was single as there were no other pleasures. There were many restaurants then, but when I ~~went~~ there last summer I was surprised to see more restaurants. It was such a dirty town that I wanted to go back to Sacramento. My husband's friend had coaxed him to go to Walnut Grove, so we went there. It was so dirty that it was nicknamed the "Garbage Town". The houses were like barns made of rough board with paper pasted inside and divided into rooms. All the houses were like that. Half of the town where we lived was occupied by Chinese gambling houses. The doors were open and we could see inside when we passed by. I was surprised to see many Chinese gambling, and a crowd of Japanese around them. I thought I came to a terrible town. We went there in 1913, and in 1915 there was a big fire. A Japanese wife who had just come from Japan was cooking lunch with a gasoline stove when the gasoline caught fire, As the houses were made of paper it burned quickly. The fire was started around noon, and by 2 o'clock everything in Japanese and Chinese towns was reduced to ashes. At that time I had 2 children. I carried

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one daughter on my back, and took the other by the hand and went to a ranch without even a diaper. That night I needed diapers for the babies, so I went to Isleton which is about 9 miles from here to buy diapers. A friend of ours in the country came with a 2-horse wagon and took us to their camp.

Q: About how many Japanese were in the town then?

A:

Q: Was it bigger than now?

A: It was not bigger until it was rebuilt. We built this house in 1915. The house in front of the Japanese Methodist Church used to be the Japanese language school, which was built by Rev. Imai. Upstairs of the building was used by the Japanese Association, and downstairs was used as the Japanese language school. It escaped the fire so people evacuated there. Fortunately we had a friend in the country so we went there. Everyday people gathered at the school and discussed whether to build houses or not. At that time Mr. Locke, a wealthy landlord invited Japanese to build houses on his land, but we decided to build them where we used to live.

Q: Japanese stayed here, but did Chinese leave?

A: Many of them stayed here. In 1928 or '29, a night watchman started a fire and China Town was burned down. They did not rebuild it after that. Only 2 or 3 Chinese gambling houses remained.

Q: There were many Japanese, weren't there?

A: Yes, there were. Nowadays most farmers are Americans, but in those days farmers were all Japanese.

Q: Were there brothels around here?

A: Yes, there were 5 or 6 of them, and they were all Japanese.

Q: About how many women were there?

A: One for each brothel. Also there were taverns and restaurants.

This was the producing center of asparagus, so during the asparagus season they made merry at restaurants all night long. It was so noisy that many a night I couldn't sleep. They spent all the money they made from asparagus on restaurants and gambling. I think many Japanese did foolish things when they were young. If they had saved the money, there would have been many successful people. They spend enormous amount of money on gambling.

Q: I heard that there was a spirited woman who managed a restaurant or something here. Have you heard about her?

A: The wife of the owner of Hayashi Company was a spirited woman, and she owned a restaurant. She is dead now, but her son-in-law, Sugimoto Takan is managing a grocery store now, It is a big grocery store, and it has a good business. It sells fish, meat and everything.

Q: What was the woman's name?

A: It was Saki-San. She was from Kumamoto. She could play samisen and sing. She had good voice. She was a good woman. Her husband was a good man, too. She spent her money to help many people. She was a woman of ability. She brought up all her nephews in her home. Her husband's name was Hayashi Tatsujiro. He was a fine man. She was not too pretty, but she was a charming lady. They adopted a girl from Aichi Prefecture as their daughter, but she died leaving the children. The oldest son has a good job in Sacramento. The next one is living in San Francisco. The younger daughter is not married as she is mentally retarded.

Q: Were there many single men in those days?

A: They were all single men.

Q: There were not many Japanese women around 1915, weren't there?

A: No, there weren't. We built this house in 1915, and this son was born in 1916. Strangely enough, I am the only one left among those who built the house in 1915; they died, went back to Japan or moved out. I am 90 years old now, and people tell me to live till 100. Asparagus and pear were produced from here to Isleton and as far as Courtland, and at harvest season tremendous number of people used to gather here.

Side 2 Q: About how long did people gather here during the harvest season?

A: They started cutting asparagus around March and finished around 4th of July. Then they started picking pears. In those days there were no packing sheds, so they built big buildings in front of their houses or by the river and packed fruits there. It was almost like outdoors except for the roof. People made good money by packing pears. Even now, people come here from Lodi and other places to pack pears at the harvest time. When I was young I used to help my husband with the barber shop, but after the children grew bigger I did not help the barber shop. Instead I went out sorting pears at pear season and made good money. I gave the money to children as spending money.

Q: I want to know more about Isseis around here. Aren't there many Isseis who got married and settled down around here?

A: There were quite a few, but most of them the husbands died, and only the widows are left and living in big houses like me.

Q: Did Isseis lead rough life spending money on drinking and gambling?

A: Yes, most single men were like that.

T: I heard that there were racketeer around here.

K: There were 14 or 15 racketeers who took commission from people who made money by gambling. They did not do much bad things. When people made money by gambling they had to take these racketeer to restaurants and treat them. They were vagrants.

Q: What were their jobs?

A: They did not have any jobs. They loafed around the gambling houses and got money from those who made money by gambling. I think it was called commission. They made living like that.

Q: Were they single?

A: Yes they were. They gambled themselves, and when they won they treated others. They did not have much money; they lived from day to day. There were many who came to America to study from good families in Japan, and they had beautiful hand writing. There were some fine men among them. Sorry to say they became ill or something and all died. I used to know many of them.

Q: There was a newspaperman named Mr. Ekuni who lived here only about 6 months around 1905, before you came here. He told me that there were racketeer here who bought and sold women. Have you heard about it?

A: Prostitutes who came here were mostly from Tokyo and Yokohama. They were all deceived by Japanese and sold to Chinese in Yokohama, and came here with Chinese. I heard that it was pitiful because they were put to work as soon as they came here.

Q: Did Chinese own 5 or 6 brothels that were here?

A: No, Japanese owned them. Those women were bought by Japanese.

Q: What kind of people owned brothels?

A: They were ordinary people, mostly from Aichi Prefecture, who were good at that kind of thing.

Q: What did they do?

A: They did not do anything. There was a big round table in the front part of boarding houses. Men played cards there while wives worked as prostitutes. There were men like that.

Q: It was a terrible society wasn't it? Weren't you surprised when you came here?

A: I was surprised at first, but I became used to it by and by. I was surprised that there were such things in a little town of about 50 to 60 people. Their customers were not people of our town, but single men from the country. The time has changed, and there is not a single brothel here now. For a while there were white prostitutes in China town, and they used to be caught by policeman in front of our house. Chinese came and gave money to the policeman, who would let the woman go. Some people used to sell liquor without liquor license. When those people went back to Japan they gave the policeman a big ham and all kind of things. Some people put money in enveloped and slipped them in his pocket. He was a shameless bad cop. He made it his business.

Q: When was that?

A: It was quite a while ago, but after this town was built. Our children were still small then.

Q: Was it before the war?

A: It was many years before the war broke out. As I look back, all kinds of things happened. After the Mexicans came there were fights every night.

Q: Who quarrelled?

A: Mexicans quarrelled among themselves. They quarrelled almost every night, and there was even a murder.

Q: When did the Mexicans start coming in?

A: Not too long ago. Before them were Portugese and Italians.

Q: Weren't fish caught around here between 1915 and 1920?

A: Yes, bass was caught,

Q: Was it caught in big quantity?

A: A lot of bass were caught. Mr. Mayeda had a fish store in the corner. There was no limit in catch, so fishermen brought all the catch to his store. Then Mr. Mayeda packed them in 50 lbs. and 100 lbs. boxes and shipped them to Los Angeles. He made a lot of money, so he built a big two-storied house in the back.

Nice bass were caught in those days, but we cannot catch them any more now. They must have gone away. There were so many bass in the river then that even our children could catch big ones. Time sure has changed.

Q: There was depression around 1930. How did you do at that time?

A: We had a hard time, but we were getting cash, although the customers didn't come much. We barely managed to feed our 7 children; 2 girls and 5 boys. As we were poor we could not feed steak to the children. I made stew in a big pot or made hamburgers. When I cooked stew my husband and I ate carrots and potatoes, and let the children have the meat. When we were having a hard time, my husband's relation who is successful in Loomis now, came from Sacramento with his son. He said he didn't have money to buy shoes for his children to go to school in, so he wanted us to help him by giving him 10 or 20 dollars. We wanted help ourselves rather than helping him. In those days it was 50¢ for a haircut and 25¢ for a shave, but nobody wanted a shave and only young men came for a haircut once in a while. We had a hard time.

Q: Did you have any field?

A: No, just the barber shop. When the children started going to high school, Mr. Akamatsu let our children work in his restaurant one after another and helped us, so I am very grateful to the Akamatsus.

I was a Buddhist when I was in Japan, and I didn't know anything about Christianity. Rev. Imai had been working at Loomis, but he happened to come here around 1913. He stayed on the second floor of an inn called Borden, and gathering a few people he started talking about Bible. Soon he started visiting camps in the country on his bicycle and gathered members. I think he was a wise man. Mrs. Akamatsu didn't like Rev. Imai, so after he visited she scattered salt to purify the house. One day she heard her second son Jiro who had been going to church pray. He was praying, "Please lead my papa and mama to God, and please help my papa stop drinking ..." When she heard it her mind took a new turn, and realized that if her son believed in God, the parents should, too, so she started going to church. She used to say that she was led by her son Jiro to become a Christian.

Q: When was that? Was it around the depression?

A: It was before the depression. Since Mrs. Akamatsu worked hard, and Rev. Imai visited the country, the church became very active. The Buddhist church was built around 1928, and our church was built by Rev. Imai in 1914. Mrs. Akamatsu was a leader. As we had many children Mrs. Akamatsu took care of them. In those days Japanese had many children just like Mexicans now. Most family had 5 or 6 children.

When the centennial celebration was held in San Francisco last year, Rev. Oishi's son came from Japan. As there were many people at the celebration I did not talk to him, but he visited us with his wife. I praised him for becoming a good pastor after his father. He said, "When I was a boy I was very naughty." I said, "Since you were a pastor's son you were haughty, and used to beat up other children" "I still remember making other children cry" he said.

Q: Did Rev. Oishi come after Rev. Imai?

A: Yes, he stayed here long, too. He was a fine person. I was happy when Rev. Oishi's son came to visit me. He took some pictures to show to his mother. I gave him a program of the 50th anniversary of our church. As Rev. Oishi was a fine man, his son became a fine man, too.

Q: Did many people around here have hard time during the depression?

A: Yes, they did.

Q: Were there many people who were unable to make a living?

A: Some people who had many children had to borrow from the stores. We managed to make a living without doing that, as the Akamatsus let our sons work as waiters and fed them, so we had less mouths to feed. Looking back, I am surprised Japanese Isseis raised so many children. I don't know how many times I thought I didn't want children, but they take good care of me now. I think God blessed me with children, so I am ashamed I has such an idea.

Q: Was the fire in 1928?

A: It was in 1915, and China Town was burned down in 1928.

Q: Till about what year did gambling continue?

A: It was started before we came here, and continued till the gambling houses were burned down.

Q: Did it end by the fire?

A: Only 2 or 3 gambling houses remained, but they are not in business as there are no Chinese here. There are some Chinese in Locke, but they are old.

Q: Did things get better after the depression ended around 1933?

A: Yes, it became better.

Q: Did many Japanese come since then?

A: Many Japanese achieved success and went back to Japan, and many died.

Q: Did many Japanese gather here at harvest time till the war started?

A: Yes, they did.

Q: What did you think when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: I was scared. My older son was helping the barber shop, so I was working at a white family doing housework. When we evacuated I stored some household goods at their house.

Q: What did you think will become of Japanese?

A: We thought they were coming here. Everybody said what a daring thing a poor country like Japan did against America which has abundant material. I was sad when we were put in a center.

Q: Where did you go to?

A: Colorado.

Q: Did you go to any assembly center before you went to Colorado?

A: We went to Merced for 2 to 3 months, then we went to Colorado.

Q: How was the assembly center in Merced?

A: It was very hot. We were sunburned and everyone looked like black people.

Q: When did you enter the assembly center?

A: Around May. It was very hot.

Q: How were the barracks?

A: The ceiling was low, so it was very hot. Our house was on the corner. There were many grapes planted along the barracks, and they were almost ready to be picked, but there were guards on the watch over watching down on us. Some black people came to the edge of the fence ^{with children} to get some chicken and eggs. We bought some candies at the canteen and gave them to the Blacks. They were very sympathetic toward us.

Q: Were the barracks crudely built?

A: Yes, they were very crudely made with tar paper on the roof.

Q: How was the food?

A: It was normal. They repeated the same menu every week.

Q: How old were you when the war broke out?

A: I think I was early 50s.

Q: Weren't your children quite grown up?

A: Yes, they were.

Q: How old was the youngest one?

A: He was still young. I think he was not 10 years old yet.

Q:

A: Two Mexican families lived there. They were very dirty and noisy.

The children were very mischievous and scribbled on the front wall of the church we had just painted nicely. We couldn't help if the church was vandalised as there was nobody there. Since there was a fire when Rev. Fujii was here, we rebuilt the parsonage, and put thick wall around it. Now the wall is old and cracked, and so much plaster falls on the floor that we can hardly walk. I don't know how to clean it. There are only four church members and they are all old women, so they cannot do anything.

Q: What happened to Niseis?

A: There are no Niseis here; they have all gone to Sacramento, as there were no jobs here. Only old people live here. When Rev. Masuko was here we had Sunday school, but after he moved away we don't have Sunday school any more as there are no Christian children here.

Q: What is the name of your daughter in Sacramento?

A: Her name is Nakayama. I cannot remember where she lives.

Q: What do you remember about Merced?

A: I don't think there was church service there. I went to church after we went to Colorado.

Q: Were there any troubles in Merced?

A: No, I didn't hear of any in Merced. When we went to Colorado Rev. Shirakawa of the Buddhist church here was the only Buddhist minister, but there were more than 10 Christian pastors. On top of that Rev. Yamaga came from Tule Lake. There were two churches, and we used to go to church in 3 feet of snow.

Q: How long did you stay in Colorado?

A: We stayed there for 2 to 3 years.

Q: What did you do after that?

A: We came back here as we left our house to Mr. Alex Brown. His manager must have let Filippinos or some other people live in our house because it was very dirty.

Q: Was the house empty when you came back?

A: We told them that we were coming back, so they let tenants out.

Q: Did you used to bank at Mr. Alex Brown's bank?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you own just this house, or did you own land, too?

A: We owned the house, but the land belonged to the bank. We built this house in 1916, so it has been ours since then.

Side 3

Q: When you leased your house did you get any rent?

A: No, they did not give us a single penny. We were glad that it wasn't burned. Japanese hall and hotels were burned down by the fire, but our house was not burned, so we could come back. Our relations who did not have houses came to live with us.

Q: About how many people lived here?

A: Two couples here, and two couples there, and about 3 children slept in one bed. By and by they found houses and left.

Q: Did you have anything stolen?

A: There were some things stolen like sewing machine, but we left most of the valuable things at ^{our} church. Most everybody around here left their belonging at our church. The present social room was packed with goods.

Q: Was anything stolen?

A: Nothing was stolen. I heard that Filippinos held meetings there, but they did not take anything. They may have used the tea cups, but they were still there. Hymnals were there, also. There are many books upstairs of the church, so please come and pick what you want.

Q: When Rev. Imai was here he gathered many members, but I heard that many went back to Buddhist church when the church was built. Is that true?

A: Yes, the Buddhists enticed them into coming to their church. Rev. Oishi was going to Isleton, but the Buddhist church enticed not only Buddhist but even Christians to their church. There were many Christians in Isleton, but they stayed in other states after the war. Here, also, most Christians stayed in New York and Colorado. If they had come back, our church would have been more active. Rev. Asanuma evacuated with us. When the Buddhists were arrested by F.B.I. and put in concentration camps Rev. Asanuma worked hard to collect signatures for petition to release them.

That is why many Buddhists said that they would become Christians if Rev. Asanuma came back here, but he never came back here. He served in a church in Denver for 2 years, but he resigned from it for some reason, and is preaching the gospel as a pastor of an independent church. He sends me Christmas card with pictures of children every year. I knit sweaters for the boys and shawls ~~for the~~ girls ; and send them with Christmas cards.

Q: Did you start working right after you came to Sacramento?

A: I learned little at a time from my husband.

Q: What did you do?

A: I helped my husband by shaving customers. Many white people came here on way home from work on Saturdays, They were dirty.

Q: Did you do the same work here, also?

A: The customers were cleaner here.

Q: Did you cut hair, too?

A: Sometimes when we were busy.

Q: Were there just you and your husband?

A: Yes, just two of us.

Q: About how many people come on a busy day?

A: On Saturdays 5 or 6 people were waiting.

Q: About how many people come in one day? About 30?

A: Not so many. We borrowed money from here and there to build the house, but we paid them back in no time.

Q: That was the Golden Age in Walnut Grove, wasn't it?

A: Yes, it was. Many people gathered here.

Q: Why didn't people gather at Walnut Grove as it did in olden days?

A: Many people did not come back here after the war. Most farmers went back to Japan, and many people died. Young people moved to Sacramento to work. Four of our children are in Sacramento.

Q: Are you glad you came to America?

A: I am glad I came to America. I would have been lonesome after my parents died as I did not have any brothers or sisters.

Q: How many times did you go back to Japan?

A: Only once. My husband died in 1962. My son told me to visit my cousins in Japan, so I went there in 1962. After the war I sent many packages to my relations in Japan, and before I went to visit them I sent them presents, so they were very happy. The life in Japan is good now, so they do not write to me. I don't write to them either because I think they are doing well.

Q: Did you ever have disgusting customers?

A: Yes, sometimes drunkards came. Mrs. Akamatsu told me that if a man tries to take liberty with you, kick him in the groin, and he will stop it. Sometimes poor people came saying they were hungry. I gave them coffee or soup with a couple of pieces of bread. In those days there were many^{single} white men who did not have jobs nor places to sleep, so they slept under the overpass.

Q: How many rooms did you have in the house you first lived in when you first came here?

A: About two rooms; a bedroom and the barber shop.

Q: How about kitchen?

A: It was downstairs and it was dirty, but I had to cook there. Other houses were all like that. It was a strange, dirty town.

Q: Did it become cleaner after it was burned down?

A: Yes, it came to look like a town after the fire. Until then it was so dirty that people who came from outside called it the "Garbage Town". There were about 3 Chinese restaurants.

Q: Were they operated by Chinese?

A: Yes, they were. They were always packed with customers. I get chills when I think about those days.

Q: When were you baptized?

A: It was when Rev. Suigi was here.

Q: About how many years after you came here?

A: Rev. Suigi came here after Rev. Oishi. He became ill and died here. He was a quiet good man.

Q: Was it before the depression?

A: I don't remember if it was before or after the depression. It was long time ago, and I was still young. He came after Rev. Fujii. When Rev. Fujii was here the church was burned down, and a new church was built.

Q: I forgot to ask you, but there was a crusade against gambling here, wasn't there? Who led it?

A: Mr. Kobayashi, Shosai of Salvation Army did. He was a church member. We prepared lunch at church. Everyday they marched through China Town beating drums and singing. Chinese became angry and threw fire crackers at them.

Q: Was it when Chinese gambling houses were still here?

A: Yes, there were many. The town was already built then, so it must have been around 1920.

Q: Who was the pastor then?

A: It was Rev. Imai.

Q: Did Rev. Imai help, too?

A: Yes, he did.

Q: Wasn't somebody shot at?

A: That was in Stockton. His picture is in our church. He was the secreatry of the Japanese Association and a fine man. I went to Stockton to attend his funeral. He was shot from behind by a Chinese. He was the only victim.

Q: How long did the crusade last?

A: Quite a long time, maybe a month.

Q: Did it have good results?

A: Two or three Japanese became members of Salvation Army.

Q: Were there some people who went back to gambling after that?

A: Yes, some people went back secretly. In the meantime Tokyo Club was established in the corner over there. Members of Tokyo Club watched the streets so that Japanese wouldn't go to Chinese gambling houses. Chinese used to come at night and hit those watchmen with pipes that had lead inside. Some people had his kidney damaged by it. Chiⁿese did cruel thing.

Q: When was Tokyo Club established?

A: It was quite late, around 1930. It was like a boarding house.

They hired cooks and furnished meals to people who stayed there and went to work. Vagrants who used to hang around China Town were hired by Tokyo Club, so they could not go to China Town. However, Tokyo Club did not last long as not too many Japanese went there.

Q: Was it because Japanese went to Chinese gambling houses?

A: Some Japanese wanted to go back to Chinese gambling houses, so they went there secretly. When they were caught by Japanese, they were beaten with small stones wrapped in handkerchief. They did cruel things in those days. The manager of Tokyo Club was transferred to Sacramento, and on New Year's Eve he was shot down. They killed the top man of the opposing side. In Stockton, also, Mr. Higashi from Wakayama who was a vagrant here for a long time was shot and killed after he moved there. He did not do anything bad, but he was shot from behind while he was in a car. The man who shot him was caught.

Q: Who was that?

A: A Japanese racketeer. I heard that he was a bad man when he was in Japan, and was hung at San Quentin.

Q: What was the name of the boss who was killed?

A: Higashi. He was from Wakayama. He was a good man. There were murder all the time in those days. There is nothing like that now, and there is no young people, so the society has changed.